

CORRESPONDENCE

L & F GOES ON THE AIR

EDITORS LAND AND FREEDOM:

I happened to read the July-August issue of your magazine LAND AND FREEDOM. Your proposals appear to be both sound and intelligent.

Every Wednesday we present a radio program over Station WLTH at 1:30 P. M. We would be pleased to have someone on the editorial board of your magazine speak for about 15 minutes on Nov. 27th.

Kindly let me know whether it will be possible for you to accept this invitation.

Cordially yours,

FRANCIS MERCHANT

THE BIOSOPHICAL INSTITUTE

New York, N. Y.

(In response to the above kind offer of The Biosophical Institute, Mr. C. J. Smith delivered a radio talk on the subject of "Idealism and Realism," in which the Georgeist philosophy was treated from the viewpoint of practical idealism. The Biosophical Institute, of which Dr. Frederick Kettner is the Founder and President, is an organization devoted to Character and Peace Education. Its headquarters are at Broadway and 67th Street, New York City.—Ed.)

GILBERT TUCKER ON ORGANIZATION

EDITORS LAND AND FREEDOM:

I should like to add a word to the recent pro and con discussion in LAND AND FREEDOM regarding organization, in which I took the affirmative side. As is often the case, when we accentuate differences, we lose sight of major points of agreement, and I am sure that Mr. Frank Chodorov and myself are far more in accord than may be apparent.

By organization Mr. Chodorov means a group united for one of two purposes: to quote his words, "to enjoy one another's company because of this common interest, or to impose on others their common interest by the strength of numbers." If such are to be the objects of an organization, let's have none of it, and I agree with him as to the futility of any such plan. But are these the purposes at which we should aim, or are they the purposes of organizations somewhat comparable to those we already have? If Mr. Chodorov will read the objectives which I roughly outlined, he will, I think, be largely in agreement with me.

There are countless organizations which, in a way, parallel the goal at which we should aim, all devoid of the objectives to which Mr. Chodorov rightly objects. Consider many of the professional associations of physicians, lawyers, architects, nurses, educators and the like, or more commercially-minded groups like Chambers of Commerce, trade associations and kindred organizations. Or study innumerable organizations working for mere correlation, avoidance of over-lapping and general efficiency including the great problem of financing—charity organization societies, community chests and the like. True, they sometimes do have good times together and sometimes they unwisely yield to the temptation to indulge in ill-judged political action, but all this is apart from their major purposes, and indeed organization might be very useful to us in holding in check some untimely and half-baked political campaigns. As for some lighter activities, there can be little objection, if not overdone; need we always go about all our serious purposes devoid of all sense of comradeship or of pure fun? Even the Henry George School has its occasional dinners and jollifications—and what harm do they do, as long as they are mere side-

shows while serious business goes on uninterrupted in the big tent. Perhaps sometimes, if practised with moderation, as should be all amusements, the greater purpose is even furthered by such affairs as long as they remain wholly incidental.

In the same issue of LAND AND FREEDOM which carried the recent discussion, I note that many recognize the imperative need of association. Almost uniformly, these writers see, as does Mr. Chodorov, that the imperative need is education, although they may not always interpret that word in a way confined only to formal study in the class-room. Mr. Chodorov wisely states the educational objective of the School, devoted to and chartered for that specific purpose, but why limit the stimulation of the countless avenues of service, which he mentions, to work for and under the School? "An educational institution must be devoid of any political effort" and in that I would agree; I would even go further, for I am not at all sure that "to bombard editors with letters" is a proper function of a School, although training in such procedure is entirely proper. The graduates as well as many others must be encouraged to engage in many lines of work, which are almost wholly educational in the broadest sense but which nevertheless do not fall directly within the province of a chartered school.

Perhaps the greatest objectives of such an enterprise as I urge, should be correlation and financing. It should aid and encourage many activities, again generally educational, outside of the province of the class-room, and it should be the great central organ for financing our work as a whole but without the slightest interference with operations conducted by groups of a specialized or local nature. That many opportunities are lost for securing considerable sums for the promotion of our great task—is a matter of positive knowledge, and the explanation lies in the simple fact that we have no strong and stable association which represents the rank and file of Georgeists and is not limited, either positively or by policy and custom, to a specific activity.

Certainly, multiplicity of national organizations is not to be desired. Should any spirit of enterprise or cooperation be evinced, there are two existing bodies which might well be developed to fill a larger field—the Robert Schalkenbach and the Henry George Foundations. Both have weaknesses which must be eliminated before either can take the place which it might assume. The Schalkenbach Foundation has no broad membership but is only a well administered trusteeship for handling certain funds. It is made up of busy men who can afford but little time for its affairs and it commands no general support from Georgeists. The Henry George Foundation, to put it bluntly, does little but promote an annual conference and hold title to George's birth-place. If either or both of these organizations would undergo a renaissance and attract real support from the many Georgeists, today so often dormant, there would be limitless possibilities ahead. Of the two, the Schalkenbach is the most hopeful and my suggestion is that some policy be developed for building up a membership—call them members, associates, friends or what you will—to which could be delegated some measure of responsibility for aiding its work, broadening its field and for raising funds. Every effort should be made to avoid its domination by cranks and extremists or by those within our ranks who are intolerant of every endeavor not in line with their single-track minds.

The functions of these members or associates might be only advisory and contributory but it would seem that there could be no objection to their representation on the board, for one may question whether a close corporation device, with a self-perpetuating board, is the best when a large and general support is sought. With energy and wisdom, and particularly with tact and tolerance, a

strong organization could in time be developed, strengthening the Schalkenbach Foundation, enabling it to expand and develop.

The new association would be but little different from the foundations of today except in stability, vigor, more general appeal and in the possibility which it would offer to secure better co-operation and more adequate financing for our great task. What possible objection can there be to such a program?

Albany, N. Y.

GILBERT M. TUCKER

With all respect for Mr. Tucker's views as above expressed, we believe the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation is doing a splendid work, and should continue to function in its present special field.

ED.

AN AUSTRALIAN VIEW ON INTEREST

EDITORS LAND AND FREEDOM:

Your July-August issue contains an interesting article on a "Theory of Interest" by Mr. Gaston Haxo. He is sound in his statements that interest is not due to the reproductive forces of nature; also, that the contract (interest) freely entered into by borrower and lender, both of whom benefit therefrom, is equitable; and this custom is not likely to cease. Payment for service rendered, and it is commonly so understood, is the justification for interest, and the average rate is determined by competition between lenders. The return to lenders is their own concern.

I purchase a machine (capital). I purchase it from my own funds. It is mine for all time. That is just. But again, I borrow money not for itself, but for the service it supplies and I buy the machine. It is not mine. I pay for its hire. That is just. Service for service—interest.

Surely Mr. Haxo's statement that interest as an institution is "but the evil fruit of an evil economic system", and is "unearned increment" is wrong. It largely arises from his treating money as if it purchased only capital. If I, a land speculator, buy and sell vacant lots I do not spend money in purchasing capital. I purchase land—a wide distinction. If I buy a block, erect a building upon it, and let the whole, I am paid in money; I receive so much in interest on my building (capital). *This is just.* And I receive so much in land rent. This is due to society, and I have no just claim to it. Mr. Haxo makes no such vital distinction.

There is little doubt the enormous land rent incomes of Astors, English dukes, German junkers, etc. are invested by them partly in purchasing additional land—not capital. They also invest land-rent money in capitalistic enterprises, claiming "interest" and also in interest-bearing Government loans, stealthily reducing the masses to slavery. The whole world is the sufferer.

The investment origin is land rent privately appropriated. Only in this sense is Mr. Haxo's statement correct that "interest as an institution has its roots in land monopoly and the resultant exploitation of labor". This investment of the people's values we must put an end to. We must eliminate all land rent from private incomes.

Then will money lent be invested in capital alone, which, with interest thereon, Mr. Haxo endorses as just. Long-term interest on debts would disappear and back debts be paid off, for a new world of prosperity would prevail. The effect of breaking up land rent monopoly would be the same as witnessed in early "Go West" days before land speculation got the mastery and brought the United States to its present condition of progress and poverty. George would be vindicated. So great would be the demand for labor and capital, that wages and interest (both just, and the same in origin) would rise together, and with land rent collected and the abolition of monopolies, parasitism would be ended.

Melbourne, Australia.

F. T. HODGKISS

"CORRECCION"

EDITORS LAND AND FREEDOM:

Mr. Joseph Sinnott, in his article "The Land Problem in Mexico," displays a remarkable knowledge of this country and the rapid development of its national economic life in the course of one century. I should like, however, to correct a few errors in the article.

In the first place, the name Anahuac which he applies to one of the strong tribes in pre-Columbian times is wrong. Anahuac was the name of the luxuriant valley on which the City of Mexico is situated; it means "near the water," in reference to its many lakes. The tribe he mentions was named Nahuatl. This really was a generic name including several of the best cultured tribes, and it means "one who speaks well."

The labor movement under Lombardo Toledano which Mr. Sinnott refers to favorably, has been only a political trick to give power to a group of workingmen's leaders leaning strongly to Bolshevism. Toledano himself and President Cardenas seem to believe in the efficacy of Communism and have fanatically worked for its spread. As often happens, the new Frankenstein has become too strong for them, and they no longer know how to wield it. Fortunately there is a large amount of common sense among the common people, and workingmen have begun to see the uselessness of Marx's theory.

I, too, have regretted that our presidents "do not know the way." But we should not wonder; in Cardenas' cabinet figure men who are professed Georgeists. Why have they done nothing toward the subdivision of large estates by means of the fiscal weapon, as Henry George advises? The other way brings a neat sum into the private pockets of functionaries. The temptation is too great. Then, what use would a copy of "Progress and Poverty" be in the hands of Mexico's leaders? They won't read it. I wonder whether the leaders of the United States have ever studied it.

Monterrey, Mexico

PROF. E. T. WESTRUP

EDITORS LAND AND FREEDOM:

We are very pleased with the spirit manifested in your editorials. They remind us of Louis F. Post's *The Public*. While always forceful, Post was never bitter or rancorous.

Pasadena, Calif.

MR. AND MRS. FRANK H. BODE

(Continued from page 183)

which men might claim title. Security of individual liberty, attested by citizenship, and encompassing freedom to enjoy all other social and government services, is another, and paramount, service for which Rent is compensation.

Were these truths understood and recognized by all—what man, or group of men, would have the face or unwise wisdom to precipitate a war, to preserve to themselves the privilege of ignoring their obligations to society, the payment of Rent in full to the government? By unitedly promulgating the truth that men must toil to possess the "increments" of nature, might not Georgeists again start mankind on the march towards the goal of Henry George—the public collection of the Rent and the abolition of Taxation? Might not such a program remove obstacles to the solution of the land problem, and disclose the insanity and futility of war? Would they deny this to have been his goal?